

Rules and Fines

Pets must be kept on a leash. There is a \$50.00 fine for non-compliance. Please use pet pick-ups and dispose of properly.

Other fines range from \$50 to \$250 for violating federal regulations on fees, speeding, damage to the monument’s natural resources, and other infractions. For a complete listing, call BLM Law Enforcement at the Albuquerque District, Rio Puerco Field Office.

Visitor Services

Lost and Found

Bureau of Land Management, Albuquerque District, Rio Puerco Field Office, 505/761-8700 or the Pueblo de Cochiti main office, 505/465-2244.

Convenience Store, Gas and Camping Facilities at Cochiti Lake

Snacks, water, soda, sandwiches and gas can be obtained at the convenience store located near the town of Cochiti Lake. Camping, boating facilities and RV hookups are available at the Cochiti Lake Recreation Area.



From the Veterans’ Memorial Scenic Overlook, you can see spectacular vistas of Camada and Peralta Canyons, the Dome Wilderness, and Jemez Mountains.



A beautiful view from atop the Canyon Trail.



Leave No Trace: Plan ahead and prepare - Travel and camp on durable surfaces - Dispose of waste properly - Leave what you find - Minimize campfire impacts - Respect wildlife - Be considerate of other visitors.

BLM/NM/GI-05-08-1232



A spring snowfall blankets the magical tents.

For more information contact:  
Albuquerque District  
Rio Puerco Field Office  
435 Montano NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87107  
www.nm.blm.gov  
505/761-8768 or 505/761-8700

Trail Guide

Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument

New Mexico • Albuquerque District



...where culture and nature meet

BLM



## WELCOME TO KASHA-KATUWE TENT ROCKS NATIONAL MONUMENT

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) manages Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument to protect its geologic, scenic and cultural values. The agency enjoys a partnership with the Pueblo de Cochiti, the University of New Mexico, and Sandoval County to provide access, facility development and maintenance, resource protection, research opportunities, public education and enjoyment.

The Pueblo de Cochiti has always considered this area a significant place. “Kasha-Katuwe” means “white cliffs” in the

traditional Keresan language of the pueblo. Under the BLM’s administration, these lands were designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and contain a National Recreational Trail. On January 17, 2001, Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks was designated a national monument.

### Of Time and the Rocks

Located on the Pajarito Plateau in north-central New Mexico, the Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument is a remarkable outdoor laboratory, offering an opportunity to observe, study, and experience the geologic processes that shape natural landscapes. The elevation of the national monument ranges from 5,570 feet to 6,760 feet above sea level.

The cone-shaped tent rock formations are the products of volcanic eruptions that occurred 6 to 7 million years ago and left pumice, ash and tuff deposits over 1,000 feet thick. Tremendous explosions from the Jemez volcanic field spewed pyroclasts (rock fragments), while searing hot gases blasted

down slopes in an incandescent avalanche called a “pyroclastic flow.” In close inspections of the arroyos, visitors will discover small, rounded, translucent obsidian (volcanic glass) fragments created by rapid cooling. Please leave these fragments for others to enjoy.

Precariously perched on many of the tapering hoodoos are boulder caps that protect the softer pumice and tuff below. Some tents have lost their hard, resistant caprocks and are disintegrating. While fairly uniform in shape, the tent rock formations vary in height from a few feet to 90 feet.

As the result of uniform layering of volcanic material, bands of grey are interspersed with beige and pink-colored rock along the cliff face. Over time, wind and water cut into these deposits creating canyons and arroyos, scooping holes in the rock, and contouring the ends of small, inward ravines into smooth semi-circles.

### Historical and Cultural Perspective

The complex landscape and spectacular geologic scenery of the national monument has been a focal point for visitors for centuries. Surveys have recorded many archaeological sites reflecting human occupation spanning 4,000 years. During the 14th and 15th centuries, several large ancestral pueblos were established and their descendants, the Pueblo de Cochiti, still inhabit the surrounding area.

In 1540, the Spanish explorer Francisco Vasquez de Coronado made mention of the Pueblo de Cochiti in their diaries. Throughout the 17th century, settlers would follow Juan de Oñate’s route along the Rio Grande Valley, bringing trade, farming and domestic animals, and claiming land grants from the Spanish Crown. In 1680, the Cochiti people joined other pueblos in a rebellion that drove the Spaniards south to El Paso, Texas. By 1870, iron rails stretched into the territory of New Mexico bringing loggers, miners and others to enjoy its rich natural resources.

### Plants and Animals

In the midst of the formations, clinging to the cracks and crevices high on the cliff face, the vibrant green leaves and red bark of the manzanita shrub stand in sharp contrast to the muted colors of the rocks. A hardy evergreen, the manzanita produces a pinkish-white flower in the spring that adds to the plant’s luster. Other desert

plants found in the area include Indian paintbrush, Apache plume, rabbitbrush, and desert marigold.

Depending on the season, you are likely to see a variety of birds. Red-tailed hawks, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, House Finches, violet-green swallows, Hepatic Tanagers, and an occasional golden eagle soar above the area or use piñon-covered terrain near the cliffs.

The ponderosa pine and piñon-juniper woodlands provide habitat for big game and nongame animals. Elk, mule deer, and wild turkey frequent the higher elevations. Coyotes, chipmunks, rabbits, and ground squirrels are prevalent.

### Getting There

The national monument includes 4,124 acres of public land located 35 miles south of Santa Fe and 52 miles north of Albuquerque, with the most direct access from Interstate 25. From Albuquerque, take the exit for Santo Domingo/Cochiti Lake Recreation Area (Exit 259) off I-25 onto NM Route (SR) 22. Follow the signs on SR 22 to Cochiti Pueblo and Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument. Turn right off SR 22 at the pueblo water tower (painted like a drum) onto the access road, Tribal Route 92, which connects to BLM Road 1011/FS 266. Travel 5 miles on the gravel road to the national monument’s designated parking/picnic area, fee station and trailhead. Recreation vehicles (RV’s) are not suggested on the gravel, access road.

From Santa Fe, take the Cochiti Pueblo Exit 264 off I-25 onto NM Route (SR) 16. Turn right off SR 16 onto SR 22 and follow the signs to Cochiti Pueblo and the national monument.

A portion of the 5-mile access road to the national monument crosses Pueblo de Cochiti tribal land. Along with the pueblo, neighbors in the vicinity include the Santo Domingo Indians, the Jemez Indians, private landowners, the Santa Fe National Forest and State of New Mexico. Please respect these landowners and their property.

### National Recreational Trail

The National Recreational Trail is for foot travel only, and contains two segments that provide opportunities for birdwatching, geologic observation and plant identification. Both segments of the trail begin at the designated monument parking



*The House Finch is commonly seen at Tent Rocks – the male has a bright red chest while the female is brown with bold streaks.*

Photo courtesy of Fish & Wildlife Service



*Manzanita—used for medicinal purposes by Native Americans.*

Photo by M’Lee Beazley



*The Monument serves as an outdoor laboratory for educational groups.*

of the Sangre de Cristo, Jemez, Sandia mountains and the Rio Grande Valley. Both trails are maintained; however, during inclement weather the canyon may flash flood and lightning may strike the ridges.

### Veterans’ Memorial Scenic Overlook

The Veterans’ Memorial Scenic Overlook was dedicated in 2004, to all American Veterans. The overlook provides spectacular vistas of Camada and Peralta canyons, the Dome Wilderness and Jemez mountains. Travel 9 miles west on TR 92/BLM 1011 to the parking area and overlook. The overlook offers a quiet area for contemplation and reflection. Road conditions and access are seasonal.

### Your Safety, Our Concern

#### Access

The national monument may be closed by order of the Pueblo de Cochiti Tribal Governor.

#### Weather

During periods of inclement weather, the access road may wash out or become impassible. Contact the BLM or the Pueblo de Cochiti for current road conditions.

#### Visitation Hours

Winter (November 1 to March 31) – 8 am to 5 pm  
Summer (April 1 to October 31) – 7 am to 7 pm

#### Day Use Only

Camping, fires, shooting, collecting plants and rocks, defacing and climbing on the tent rocks are **prohibited**. Glass containers can be hazardous and are best left at home. View the national monument on foot; to reduce erosion, stay on the designated trail. Motorized vehicles and mountain bikes are permitted only on the access road and designated parking areas. Observe the posted speed limit to reduce dust and noise at Pueblo de Cochiti.

area. The Cave Loop Trail is 1.2 miles long, rated as easy. The more difficult Canyon Trail is a 1.5-mile trek up a narrow canyon with a steep (630-ft) climb to the mesa top for excellent views

### Pueblo de Cochiti

Please respect the traditions and privacy of the Pueblo de Cochiti. Photography, drawings, and recordings are not permitted in the Pueblo or on Tribal land.

### Emergency Assistance – Call 911 for the Sandoval County Sheriff’s Office

**Fee Amounts** (U.S. Currency and U.S. Bank Checks only)  
The national monument is a Standard Amenity Fee Site. All your fees are returned to the site for monitoring, maintenance, and improvements. Please have exact change and deposit the fee envelope into the fee pipe-honor system.

Private Vehicles – \$5.00 on-site fee.

Private Vehicle with 10 or more passengers – \$10.00 on-site fee.

New Mexico BLM Annual Recreation Pass – \$20.00/year.

Commercial and Adventure Tours – \$25.00 day-use permit.

Nonprofit Organizations – \$25.00 day-use permit.



*Hikers enjoy all seasons at the monument.*

Golden Eagle/Age/Access Passports – No fee per vehicle/ display pass on front dashboard.

National Park Service Pass with Hologram – No fee per vehicle/ display pass on front dashboard.

National Park Service Pass without Hologram – \$5.00/ vehicle on-site fee.

Accredited Public/Private Schools/Colleges/Universities – No fee – Day-use permit required.

Contact the Bureau of Land Management, Albuquerque District, Rio Puerco Field Office to obtain day-use permits, Golden Passports and the New Mexico BLM Annual Recreation Passes. Suggested group size is a maximum of 25 persons to reduce impacts to the resources and other visitors.



Photo by M’Lee Beazley

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